



The Bushnell Center for the Performing Arts, alongside Connecticut's other Non-Profit Organizations, Sports and Concert Venues, Promoters, and Producers, is opposed to Proposed Substitute Bill HB-6298: An Act Concerning the Fair Sale of Tickets to Entertainment Events.

HB-6298 accelerates rampant price gouging of Connecticut's consumers by commercial ticket scalpers. The proposed legislation will strengthen a scalper's ability to exploit consumers, establishing unenforceable measures quickly leading to the loss of union, arts, entertainment and sports industry jobs causing significant harm to the state's economy.

Constituents from municipalities across Connecticut are routinely victimized by secondary ticket scalpers and resellers, unknowingly paying outrageous prices for purportedly hard to find tickets, while tickets of face value are readily available through an official ticketing source with lower visibility on Internet search engines. This is clearly shown below in an example comparing a single balcony level seat at The Bushnell's Mortensen Hall for the upcoming show, *Next to Normal*, on Tuesday, March 29, 2011, as advertised and sold by The Bushnell, and the same exact seat on the same exact night as advertised and sold by commercial ticket scalper, TicketNetwork:

| As advertised on 2/23 | 1 Balcony Seat (Row K) | Additional Charges | Total Cost (1 Ticket) | % Change from Face Value |
|----------------------------------|---------------------------|--------------------|--------------------------|-----------------------------|
| Seller: The Bushnell | \$ 17.00 | \$ 3.00* | \$ 20.00 | 0% (face value) |
| Scalper: TicketNetwork | \$ 120.00 | \$ 47.20** | \$ 167.20 | 836% increase |

*Flat rate, \$3.00 Public Access Surcharge, applies to all tickets.

**In this case, TicketNetwork charges a \$22.50 Service Charge and a \$25.00 Delivery Fee.

Both seats shown above have not been purchased from The Bushnell and are still available. Because ticket scalpers (often referring to themselves as ticket brokers) have not physically purchased the tickets they advertise as readily available for purchase, consumers are mislead. Through secondary markets, patrons end up purchasing event tickets at prices 836% greater than the face value – without knowing seats in the very same location of the venue remain available from an official source (see a typical consumer complaints, attached). Currently, ticket scalpers have no real-time insight regarding the inventory of seats allocated at the original seller's venue – this helps to protect consumers and shields proprietary information from ticket scalpers in order to provide fans, fan clubs, VIP members and other interested patrons proper access to tickets – although HB-6298 would drastically change this.

Opposite HB-6298, actual legislation concerning the "Fair Sale of Tickets to Entertainment Events" would educate and protect Connecticut consumers, requiring secondary ticket brokers, resellers, commercial and unrelated ticket scalpers to provide information on their websites clearly depicting the prices of the tickets they are offering and ticket availability, compared to the price of the original face value of the ticket and the availability of the original ticket seller.

The provisions proposed in HB-6298, Section (2) subsection (e), seek to expand a commercial ticket scalper's access to seating and ticketing information. **The measures proposed in HB-6298 would provide ticket scalpers and resellers the means they need to more effectively take advantage of Connecticut consumers.**

Unfortunately, the provisions set forth in HB-6298 would not effectively protect persons who purchase tickets to entertainment events. While consumer protection and ensuring the fair sale of tickets to entertainment events are serious issues, under HB-6298, the State Department of Consumer Protection would be in no position to regulate or enforce the Federally-regulated Interstate Commerce clause of the U.S. Constitution. Ticket scalpers, brokers, and resellers are located in each of the fifty U.S. states and other international locales; they do business over the internet, phone and through the mail. **Regulating ticket sales on a state-by-state basis is not only impractical, it is impossible.** The Federal Trade Commission previously addressed the concerns of HB-6298 in File No.092-3091 and exercised its authority in this matter on February 18, 2010.

Real Examples of Frequent Consumer Complaints against Commercial Ticket Scalpers*

Posted October 16, 2009 by "EmilieSD" or Arizona: I googled Andrea Bolleci to buy his concert tickets. TicketNetwork came up on top of google's list. I purchased two tickets whose prices on TicketNetwork's website were listed as \$160/ea. With \$61 for handling and \$19 for shipping, I paid total amount of \$400 dollars for two tickets.

The tickets arrived and the ticket price on each ticket was only \$75 each! I called the company and asked why they had charged my \$160 per ticket when they were \$75 dollar tickets. I also asked them why they did not put the real value of ticket on their website. They told me that this is the way they conduct business. I told them I was going to report the to the BBB . They told me go ahead... I guess they don't care at all. I then asked to return the tickets and get a refund. They told me that all sales are final and can not be returned.

On their website, TicketNetwork announced their ticket selling revenue has reached \$1 billion. I wonder how many consumers like me in this country were scammed and lied to by this company. If they mark up over 100% on each ticket, then it means at least half billion dollars were scammed from consumers like me.

Posted December 1, 2010 by "Another Mad Consumer" in the United States: I paid \$110 each for 3 tickets (plus an "other expense" fee of \$49.50 plus \$15 shipping fee) to an event after being somehow what I now feel is hijacked to the TicketNetwork website thinking that they were the actual ticket handler for the event. I I the tickets and they are face valued at \$46 each (including the \$4 facility fee). I went to the event site and found that the seat right next to mine (and all 40 around it) are available at \$46 each. I found it odd that they could not tell me my seat # when I ordered them. It appears to me that they then purchased 3 tickets for me from the real event seller and then sold them to me. I do not believe that someone bought just the 3 seats (when all around mine are still for sale) and resold them at a huge markup to me. I think TicketNetwork did the buying and selling which is not what they claim to do in all responses to complaints I read. The event is still 2 months away. I am still waiting for a most likely never to come return phone call from a message I left at TicketNetwork. My message to them will most likely be ignored. I learned my online ticket buying lesson for sure.

Posted January 22, 2011 by "Ticket Network Stinks" of Connecticut: It looks true to me –This company appears to own a lot of copycat web sites and URL's that appear to be the "Official" web sites of the team or venue. Yes they have notice on their sites that tell you they are not however it does appear all customers read them. They also have a lot of clients mad or upset with them if you go to BBB.org or just google their name and the words Hate or Stinks Or Sucks. I would stay away from Ticket network and Ticket Liquidator.

Posted February 14, 2011 by "Xintalon" of Orgeon: I learned my lessons too. I purchased two tickets AlterBridge concert in Utah for \$250 from "The Tixx Man" via TicketNetwork.com but then I found another place (<http://smithstix.com>) that sells the same 2 tickets for \$50 bucks... I did not read the non-refund policy of TicketNetwork.com so I was unable to refund to buy the ticket. I was a fool to fall into their trap :). I am not going to buy ticket from TicketNetwork.com and will buy tickets after doing more research.